

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 DEAE-00 CIAE-00 INR-07
JUSE-00 NSAE-00 SNM-02 TRSE-00 USIA-06 NSC-05
OES-07 OMB-01 SS-15 AID-05 /084 W
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FM USMISSION GENEVA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 916
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY LONDON

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EO 11652: N/A
TAGS: SNAR, UN, LE
SUBJ: PRESS REPORT CONCERNING LEBANESE HASHISH

1. FOLLOWING IS PARTIAL TEXT OF ARTICLE APPEARING IN THE LONDON
TIMES OF SEPTMBER 5:

TITLE: "1000,000 TONS OF HASHISH ABOUT TO LEAVE LEBANON"

BETIN PARTIAL TEXT

"FROM ROBERT FISK

"BAALBEK, LEBANON, SEPT. 4

"IN JUST OVER A WEEK(S TIME, THE DRUG SMUGGLERS OF BALLBEK WILL
BEGIN TO SWAMP EUROPE AND NORTH AFRICA WITH AN ESTIMATED
100,000 TONS OF HASHISH; THE LARGEST AND POTENTIALLY THE MOST
PROFITABLE CROP OF THE DRUG EVER GROWN IN LEBANON. THEY
HAVE ALREADY ARRANGED TO SHIP HUNDREDS OF TONS BY BOAT FROM
THE NORTH LEBANESE PORT OF TRIPOLI TO ROTTERDAM, ITALIAN
PORTS, THE GREEK CYPRIOT PORT OF LARNACA, AND ALEXANDRIA
AT A STREET PRICE OF MORE THAN 1,000 BRITISH POUNDS A KILOGRAM.

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"ALTHOUGH INTERPOL AND EUROPEAN POLICE FORCES HAVE
LONG BEEN AWARE THAT LEBANON IS A BIG SOURCE OF HASHISH,
THERE IS NO INDICATION THAT THEY YET HAVE ANY IDEA OF THE
UNPRECEDENTED AMOUNT OF DRUGS ABOUT TO REACH THEIR SHORES.
"DEALERS FROM BRITAIN, HOLLAND AND ITALY HAVE VISITED BALLBEK
IN THE PAST FOUR MONTHS TO ARRANGE FOR THE SHIPMENTS. THE
BRITISH DEALER ARRIVES IN BEIRUT BY AIR EVERY TWO MONTHS

BUT ONE DUTCHMAN HAS ALREADY ARRANGED TO CARRY 1,000 KILOGRAMS OF HASHISH OUT OF LEBANON EVERY TWO MONTHS, A DEAL WHICH REPRESENTS A STREET TURNOVER OF ABOUT BRITISH POUNDS 19M.

"TO MAKE MATTERS WORSE FOR EUROPEAN POLICE FORCES, SEVERAL OF THE 30 "FAMILIES" OF GROWERS ROUND BALLBEK HAVE DECIDED THAT THEY WILL IN FUTURE CONCENTRATE THEIR ENERGIES ON THE PRODUCTION OF OPIUM.MORE THAN 30 FIELDS OF OPIUM SOUTH OF BAALBEK ARE WAITING TO BE HARVESTED IN THE NEXT EIGHT DAYS, A CROP THAT SHOULD PRODUCE SEVERAL HUNDRED TONS OF HEROIN, THE HARDEST DRUG ON THE EUROPEAN AND AMERICAN MARKETS. "IN A FOUR-HOUR TOUR OF THE HASHISH FIELDS IN THE COMPANY OF THREE DRUG SMUGGLERS THE SIZE OF THIS YEAR'S CROP WAS ONLY TOO EVIDENT.

"THE HASIHS PLANT LOOKS LIKE A MINATURE CHRISTMAS TREE WITH THICK BUSHY BRANCHES STANDING UP TO 6 FT. HIGH AND EXUDING A THICK PERFUMED SCENT. MOST OF THE FIELDS LIE OFF THE MAIN ROAD BUT TWO THIRDS OF A MILE FROM THE HILL VILLAGE OF SRAUNE. I SAW A CROP THAT STRETCHED INTO THE HORIZON, A MASSIVE FIELD MORE THAN A MILE IN LENGTH WITH EACH HASHISH PLANT STANDING ONLY A FOOT FROM THE NEXT." END PARTIAL TEXT.

2. MISSION OFFICER HAS CALLED ARTICLE TO ATTENTION OF OFFICIALS OF INTERNATIONAL DRUG CONTROL ORGANIZATIONS.

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3. MISSION WOULD APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT'S APPRAISAL OF ACCURACY OF ARTICLE. IN OUR VIEW, MANY FIGURES CITED APPEAR VASTLY EXAGGERATED.VANDEN HEUVEL

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Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 07-Sep-1977 12:00:00 am
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